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SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR SIGNS MOU ON EARTH SCIENCE COOPERATION

¶1. The Ambassador and Department of Energy Secretary Rafael Lotilla signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on March 7, 2007 at the Philippine Department of Energy. The U.S. Geological Survey negotiated this MOU which provides the legal framework for scientific and technical cooperation in earth sciences. (Reftel)

¶2. The MOU allows for cooperation and investigation in biology, geography, water resources, and information systems. The MOU formalizes ongoing technical consultations to capture methane gas from Philippine coal mines and deliver it to the marketplace as natural gas. Methane is a potent greenhouse gas which can lead to global warming and mine explosions. Converting it to an energy source diminishes dependence on petroleum, enhances mine safety, and decreases a major source of climate change.

¶3. The Ambassador lauded the scientific cooperation between the U.S. and the Philippines as an important aspect of our strong partnership. Signing this MOU punctuates our joint commitment in the U.S. and the Philippines to develop clean energy sources and continue exchanges in other scientific and technical fields.

Kenney